

Sabbatical Year
CONJECTURAL
Year of
EMENDATIONS
Publication

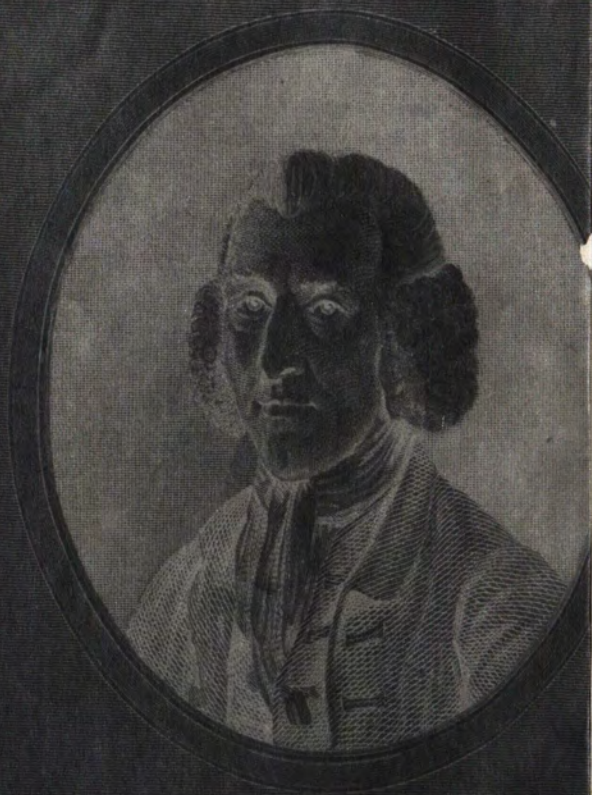
ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT,

COLLECTED FROM
VARIOUS AUTHORS,

As well in regard to WORDS as POINTING.

With the REASONS, on which the several
Alterations in the latter have been admitted
in our Edition.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year MDCC LXIII.



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Portrait of William Howver

WILLIAM HOWVER, PRINTER

Born in 1711, died in 1771

Flocks, feeding in other years quite through Arabia as far as the Euphrates, in the Sabbatic recess freely wandered over all Palæstine, being now the same as it was under the Nomades, whose dung and urine gave fresh vigour to the fields. For to manure them with compost, as is customary with us, is not the case of those lands where the want of wood makes them burn cow-dung, and sometimes human [g].

The Hebrew servant, admitted to freedom on the seventh year, was not to be dismissed without a present of corn, wine, and sheep [h], whereby he was able to lay the foundation of a new family, since he might eat of what grew of its own accord, and might feed his sheep, the hope of a future flock, where he pleased. Those whom want had brought down to poverty, the Sabbatical year thus restored to the republic, citizens, and fathers of families.

Whether there was any thing like this law among the Egyptians, who are noted for the ancient care of provision and granaries of the Pharaohs; or whether Moses meant hereby to imitate the custom of the Nomades, I cannot determine.

S E C T. IX.

The law was neglected by the Israelites.

I HAVE only this to add: that the most wise and advantageous law, by the avarice of the Israelites,

[g] In the time of Ezekiel it was no new thing, to bake bread with-fewel of cow-dung; he only prays it might not be with man's dung, Ezek. iv. 12—15.

[h] Deut. xv. 13, 14.

funk

sunk into disuse. This indeed Moses seems to have feared when he first made it [i]: nor was his fear vain, as the event proved. For in all the history of the Kings of Israel, which is written much more copiously than that of the Judges, there is no mention of the Sabbatical year, or, that which was connected with it, the year of Jubilee [k]; which yet, I think, would sometimes happen, if every seventh year the fields had their Sabbaths: and every fiftieth year, the lands which were sold, returned to their former owners, by new conveyances. For these things are so remarkable, that they must necessarily occasion some disputes, or for some other reason be worthy of an historian's notice. And yet we find nothing related of them, but this alone, that they were neglected. Naboth, because he would not part with his vineyard to the king, suffered the worst of punishments: and to sell it was forbidden by the law concerning the Jubilee year. Isaiah grievously accuses the rich, that they *laid house to house, and field to field*, and forced the citizens of inferior degree out of their country [l]; which could not have been done, if the land returned to the first proprietor every fiftieth year. To set Hebrew servants free became so little customary, that when, under Zedekiah, they were called to arms in the kingdom's dis-

[i] Lev. xxvi. 35.

[[*] Whether it was connected with the Sabbatical year, or was reckoned into the forty-ninth, will be discussed in the following Dissertation.]

[l] If. v. 8.

H 2

trek

treas, and their lords, by the persuasion of the king, had set them free; yet, after a few days, unmindful of the oath they had given, the lords reclaimed them, and compelled them to serve again, Jerem. xxxiv. 8. seqq. Nor have I found, in all the monuments of that time, any thing which can shew there was any force in, or respect paid to, that law, except Isaiah lxi. 1, 2, should allude to the year of Jubilee; though we may alude to customs laid aside and antiquated.

But I think I have light upon some traces of the time when the law began to grow out of use. Which before I enter upon, I must say somewhat of those words [m], which we translate, *the land shall enjoy her Sabbaths*. Now he that annexed the points seems to have been mistaken; and that *רָצַח* and *רָצַח* is not to be understood in Kal, but in Pihel or Hiphil. In this sense Saadiaz has expounded it, *the land shall repay her Sabbaths*, i. e. shall rest so many years as it formerly submitted to the plow against all right and justice.

For with the Arabians, *رَفَعَ* is to appease a creditor, to repay him a debt; and with the Palmyrits *רָצַח* is to pay money. Thus then I explain those words of Moses, Levit. xxvi. 33, 34. *Your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land repay her Sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in the land of your enemies. Then shall the land rest, and repay her Sabbaths* (*רָצַח*). I would have observed, is

[m] Levit. xxvi. 34. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21.

here

here undoubtedly in the conjugation Hiphil), *as long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest, because it did not rest in your Sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it*.

In this place then the author of the book of Chronicles [n] seems to have found the number of years of the Babylonish captivity: for though he cites Jeremiah, who had foretold that the Jews would undergo a LXX years captivity; yet these words, *till it repays its Sabbaths*, are not the words of Jeremiah, but of Moses, from which the author of Chronicles makes the same number of years which Jeremiah had more fully declared. *Till the word of the Lord be fulfilled by the prophet Jeremiah, and the land shall have repaid her Sabbaths, all the days that she lay desolate, she rested threescore and ten years*. The historian then takes for granted, which was well known in his time, that LXX Sabbatical years were neglected by the Israelites, which took up CCCCXC years, or rather, computing the Jubilee years, which succeeded every seventh Sabbatical year, it might be five hundred years. The beginning of the Babylonish captivity was, when Jehoiakim was carried away captive; from whence, not from the destruction of the city, the seventy years are to be numbered. If you count back from that captivity, and number five ages, you will come to the time, near Saul's reign, when the Israelites, weary of the law, and paying small obedience to Samuel, the rest of the fields seems to have been neglected: so great was the power of obstinacy and custom, that the ancient majesty and

[n] 2 Chr. xxxvi. 21.

3

veneration

eneration of this abrogated law never revived under the kings.

After the end of the Babylonish captivity, the honour and religion, no doubt, of the Sabbatical years returned, as we learn from Josephus, Antiq. xi. c. xi. 8. But these things are well known, and unworthy of repetition before you.

CRITICAL

CRITICAL REMARKS

O F

An anonymous Author, published by Mr. MASSON, in *Histoire Critique de la Republique des Lettres*, tom. v. 1714.

Shewing that the Year of Jubilee was every Fortyninth Year, being included in the Seventh Sabbatical Year; and that it probably began in the Time of SELEUCAS NICATOR.

[a] S E C T. II.

I WILL add, Sir, my doubts, though somewhat diffused, at what time of the year we fix the creation of the world, and principally on the *Sabbatical* and *Natural* years of the Jews.

Mr. Martin, in his Notes on Chap. i. 5, of Genesis, saies, that *the time was probably that of Autumn, in which by the most ancient usage they began the year, in memory of the commencement of the world at the same season.* It is indeed the sentiment of Scaliger, of Father Petavius,

[[a] The First Section of these Remarks, being an Enquiry into the Time of the Year in which the World was created, is here omitted.]

and

and of almost all our learned, which is supported by the authority of Josephus [b], and of most of the *Rabbies*, and seconded by this reason, that the time of God's creating the world, was that when the trees were loaded with fruit, and consequently the season of Autumn.

In the *Journal des Sçavans*, there is an extract from a work of a Father of the Oratory [c], where it is proved that the Jews began their civil year, not in the month of *March*, but in the month of *September*; because, if the Jews ceased to cultivate the land during the *Sabbatical* year, supposing that they began to cease in the month of *March*, they would have two years without any harvest; for they would be obliged to leave upon the land the corn which they had sowed in the preceding September; and, not having sown in the month of September of the *Sabbatical* year, they would not have been able to gather in corn the August following.

But, Sir, I find the *Caraites* Jews are here of a different sentiment from the Jewish *Rabbies*; they pretend that the time of the creation was in the *spring*, and maintain, that the distinction of the *Civil* year from the *Sacred* is only a speculation of the *Rabbies*, which has no foundation in Scripture. Even the authors of the *Gemara* fix the creation at the month of *Nisan*, as we may see in divers places of the *History of the Jews*, by Mr. *Baskage*. It is likewise the opinion

[b] L. i. c. 3. Antiq. And yet he saies, l. iii. 10. that *Nisan* is the month in which the year begins.

[c] Tom. i. p. 126.

of

of some Chronologists [d], which has been followed very lately by Father *Bonjour* [e]; according to which computation the world was finished the 21st of *April*, and this opinion has not appeared destitute of reason, nor authority.

For as *J. Cappellus* [f] observes, does it not appear more probable, that the world was created at the time when all nature is renewed, and destined for the generation and preservation of all things, than in that season when they begin to decay? It is true, at the creation of the world the trees were loaded with fruits, because the first creatures were at once produced in their perfect state; but is it surprizing, that there were fruits in the garden of Eden, in a season when they were to offer to God the first fruits of the earth in *Judea*: which season is called the time of harvest, when Joseph saies [g], that the fields were covered with corn which was now ripe? See Levit. xxiii. 5. Jos. iii. 15. and 10, 11, 12. What is more, who will presume to say, that the first fruits, produced immediately by the hand of God, and which was to be the principal nourishment of men in the state of innocence, would not remain longer upon earth than those that were raised slowly afterwards by the culture of men? The verdure and the flowers, which make the delight of the spring, would not they raise with the fruits an agree-

[d] See the learned *Long*, de annis Christi, l. i. c. 20. p. 132. and l. ii. c. 2. p. 245. Wickman, Chronol. S. l. i. par. ii. p. 55.

[e] *Bibl. Choisie*, t. xv. p. 224, &c.

[f] See his Observ. on Gen. i. 14.

[g] Antiq. l. v. c. 1. § 4.

J

able

able sensation in the garden of Eden? and is not this the reason which has induced the Rabbië *Josuah* [g], and those that follow him, to fix the creation in the spring [h], because then the earth is covered with verdure, and all its productions put forth, and form themselves. Add to this, that in the eastern countries all the grass of harvest is near *spring*. This is likewise the sentiment of *Eusebius*, of *St. Jerome*, of *St. Augustin*, and of many others of the ancient doctors of the church.

§ III. As for the proof taken from the Sabbatical year, it is certain, that the commencement of it is expressly marked after the harvest of the *sixth year*, in these words of *Exodus* [i]. *Six years thou shalt sow thy land, and shalt gather in the fruits thereof. But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest, and lie still.* Indeed in treating of the Rest that the land was to have one year, it is certain that year must necessarily begin then when they began to labour; but no consequence can be drawn for the

[g] See *Iyranus* on *Gen. i. 22.* and add the learned *Sanfui's* notes on *Acts ii. ver. 1. p. 47.*

[h] This thought, that the world was created in the spring, is so natural, that it has been that of a great Poet, who had no other light but that of Nature; I mean the great *Virgil*, who thus expresses himself:

Non alios prima crescentis origine mundi
Illuxisse dies, aliumve habuisse tenorem
Crediderim: VERA illud erat: VERA magnus agebat
Orbis, et hybernis parebant flatibus Euri, &c.

Georg. ii. 336. seqq. On which see *Turneb. Adversar. l. xxi. c. 22.* and *Taubm.* that transcribes him.

[i] *C. xliii. 10. 11.*

beginning

beginning of the natural year, nor for the beginning of the world, where there was no sowing which preceded the harvest. The beginning of the Sabbatical year answers to that of the year of Jubilee, which should be fixed, not at the commencement, but in the middle of the natural year. It is said, *that seven weeks of years should be reckoned, which make forty-nine years; and that on the tenth day of the seventh month the trumpet should be sounded, and they should celebrate the fiftieth year.* *Levit. xi. 9, 10.* The beginning of the year of Jubilee then was not the same with that of the natural year, according to the opinion of those who begin the latter at the month of Tifri; as they begin it, not at the tenth, but the first day of the month. The year of Jubilee ought to be precisely the seventh Sabbatical year, the last of the seven weeks of years to be reckoned, and consequently the forty-ninth, as *Scaliger*, *Father Petavius*, *Calvisius*, *Gerard*, *Spanheim*; and not the fiftieth, as pretended by *Bonfrere*, *Crementzenius*, *Bilcholzarus*, [k] *Corneille de la Pierre*, and *Willet* [l], as well as *Mess. Beker* [m] and *Jurieu* [n], following *Maimonides*; for otherwise there would be two years of rest, the one following the other, the Sabbatical year, and the year of Jubilee—Thus would the Jews have been still more uneasy than they are represented to be in the words of *Leviticus*, *xxv. 20, what shall we eat* (not, as it is rendered, *the seventh year, if we neither sow nor gather in our increase*) but, *if we sow not, and if we gather not the*

[k] *Calvisius*, *Isagog. Chron. c. xxv. p. 153.*

[l] *Synopsis Criticor.*

[m] *Hist. des Ouvrages des Savans*, July 1703. n. 329.

[n] *Hist. des Dogmes*, par. ii. c. 22. p. 358.

seventh year [u]? for this question has a reference to the words of ver. 4, *the seventh year thou shalt not sow*, &c. instead of which, the Israelites should have said, *what shall we eat, if we sow not, and if we gather not, the seventh and eighth years?* And God would not have answered, *you shall sow the eighth year*; for they could not have sowed after the Jubilee, till the ninth year;

[[m] Mr. Whiston gives us the following emendation of this and the subsequent verses, which, according to this Author, is unnecessary: "This is not intelligible, as it now stands in all our copies; how the rest of one year only should distress them for three! the rest of the seventh year only distresses them till the ninth! Nor have the commentators any thing material to offer as a solution of these difficulties. Accordingly Ainsworth and Dr. Wall make no attempt towards any solution at all. The context and the nature of the things themselves evidently require, that it be supplied after the manner following: *And if ye shall say (in the ordinary case of a sabbatic year) what shall we eat the seventh year? Behold, we shall not sow, nor gather in our increase. Then I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year, [and the land shall bring forth fruit for two years; and ye shall sow the eighth year. But if ye shall say (in the extraordinary case of a year of Jubilee) what shall we eat the eighth year? Behold we shall not sow nor gather in our increase (neither on the seventh nor eighth year): Then I will command my blessing on you in the sixth year,] and it shall bring forth fruit for three years, and ye shall eat of old fruit until the ninth year; until her fruits come in, ye shall eat of the old. And if we take notice, that the Jews did not sow in one year, and reap the product in another; did not sow in the eighth year, and reap its product in the ninth year; but that the sabbatic years and years of Jubilee, as is well known, began in the autumn before seed-time, and lasted till after harvest; we shall be forced to allow of this emendation."*—Whiston's *Josephus*, vol. iv. p. 524, 525. 8vo. *Dissertation on the Chronology of Josephus.*]

whence it appears, that the years for which God promises to provide, ver. 21, are not comprehended in the two following years of rest, as M. Jurieu contends, p. 359; but that they were, 1. the preceding year of harvest; 2. the Sabbatical year, with which that of Jubilee corresponds; and, 3. the year which followed, till the time of the ensuing harvest.

The authority of the Rabbies, which they bring in opposition to this, is of no great weight; as Mr. Jurieu acknowledges [o] often in his work; and it is so much the less here, because he owns himself, *that after the return from the captivity the Jews abolished it*. We may even oppose to these modern Rabbies the Calendar of Rab. *Alda*, drawn up at the time of Constantine [p]. If the Jubilee was not observed in the seventh year of the seventh week, the number SEVEN, which we shall see presently was retained in the great solemnities, would not have been observed, as Petavius remarks [q]. Lastly, if there were two years of rest following one another, they would not have sown and gathered in six years one after another after the Jubilee, from one Sabbatical year to another, as it is ordained [r], or the order of the Sabbatical years would have been interrupted; which is contrary to the calculation of the Jews, in the first book of Maccabees [s], and to

[o] P. 361.

[p] Calv. Isagog. Chr. xxv. p. 155.

[q] Doctrin. temp. l. ix. c. 27.

[r] Lev. xxv. 2.

[s] 1 Mac. vi. c. 20, 49.

that of Josephus [t]. It is therefore certain, that the year of Jubilee was only the forty-ninth, reckoning from the time when the Sabbatical year was fixed; however, it is called the fiftieth in regard to the natural year, because the six last months entered into the fiftieth year.

I know well that Mr. Martin reconciles this otherwise, in his note on Leviticus xxv. 5. where he saies that the year of Jubilee, which was the forty-ninth after the preceding Jubilee, is called the fiftieth, containing that of the preceding Jubilee, as is observed on Levit. xxiii. 16.; that though there were only forty-nine days in the *seven* weeks, which were between the Sabbath of the Passover (when they brought a handful of corn to grind), and the day following the seventh week (when they brought a cake), it is said *ye shall count fifty days*, because the day from whence they began to count was comprized in the reckoning. But it is not alike in both cases; since in the last passage it is expressly declared, that the fiftieth day was not comprized in the *seventh week*, and it is expressly said, *that the computation of fifty days must be understood even to the day after the seventh week*. Thus that was not the last day of the seventh week, which made the fiftieth; whereas according to Mr. Martin, as we have already proved, that is the last of the seventh week of Sabbatical years, which is called the fiftieth.

Further, as Mr. Jurieu observes in the place cited, the Levitical law reckoned the first Jubilee from the

[t] Antiq. xii. c. 14. and xiv. c. 28.

time

time when the Israelites began to cultivate the land of Canaan; which had not a Jubilee before it; thus they could not refer to a preceding Jubilee in this first computation: which has made Langius [u] and Wichman [w] place the first Jubilee in the fiftieth year, from the time when the Israelites began to cultivate the land of Canaan, and the other Jubilees also in the fiftieth year, containing the Jubilee preceding.

I add to all this, that he contradicts himself, when he saies that the Ecclesiastical year was that upon which they regulated all their solemnities; and yet fixes the epoch of the solemnities of the Sabbatical year and the year of Jubilee by the civil year, and not by the ecclesiastical.

§ IV. This distinction of the *Civil* and *Ecclesiastical* year does not seem in reality to agree with the Scriptures, in which the month Nisan is always called the *first* month, and never the seventh; and that of Tisri is always called the seventh, and never the *first*. It is likewise very certain, that most of the sacred ceremonies of the Jews relate to the creation of the world; and that it is in this view that the number *seven* is always found in so distinguished a manner, not only in the celebration of the *seventh day*, but also for the *seven days*, which the solemn feasts lasted; in the seven weeks of the interval between the Passover and Pentecost; in the solemnities of the feast of propitiations

[u] De ann. Christ. l. i. c. xi. p. 139.

[w] Chron. S. l. i. par. i. p. 19.

for

for seven months; and the feast of Tabernacles, which is called the solemn feast of *seven months*, 2 Chron. v. 3.; in that of the first day of the seventh month [x]; in the era of the Sabbatical year and of the Jubilee, which we have proved to be fixed to it; in the reckoning seven years to the *Sabbatical year*, and seven times seven years for that of the Jubilee.

The same thing appears in the number of victims, offered in sacrifice, Gen. xxi. 28. Numb. xxiii. 1. Job xlii. 8. 1 Chron. xv. 26. 2 Chron. xxix. 21.; in the sprinkling, which they did for seven times [y]. Add to this, the seven days prescribed to the Unclean and to the Leprous after their purification, Numb. xix. 11. 14. 16. and to the sacrifices after their consecration [z]. This distinction of the number seven, observed by the Israelites on all these occasions and in many others [a], made Censorinus say, *that in the reckoning of the days, the Israelites were strongly attached to the number seven*; and Philo, *that Moses had engraven the number seven on the hearts of his people, and of all their posterity*. It passed from the Jews to the Heathens, who thought the number *seven* was the number of *perfection*. Upon which we may consult Clemens Alexandrinus and Eusebius, who produce upon this subject diverse passages of *Hesiod*, *Homer*, *Linus*, and *Calli-*

[x] Lev. xxiii. 24. Numb. xxix. 1.

[y] Numb. xix. 4. Lev. iv. 6. viii. 11. xiv. 7. 16. 56. xvi. 14.

[z] Lev. xiv. 7. 23. viii. 35.

[a] 2 Kings iv. 35. v. 20. Jos. vii. 4.

macbus.

macbus. We know likewise that the Pythagoreans were attached strongly to this number, and that they derived the word *επτά*, which signifies *seven*, from *σεπτός* and *σεπτά*, which signify *venerable* and *sacred*.

I conclude from all this, that, since it appears by this distinction of the number *seven*, which is observable in almost all the ceremonies of the Jews in memory of the seven days of the creation, that it is to the creation of the world that most part of these ceremonies refer; and so there is no probability that God would give to the *ecclesiastical year* (which was to regulate the divine worship and the ceremonies that were observed in it) any other epoch, but that of the creation of the world.

They say, that this epoch of the *ecclesiastical year* was fixed to the month of *Nisan*, in memory of the delivery of the people of God out of Egypt. But, if we attend to it, we must acknowledge that the deliverance of the people of God out of Egypt was only at the month of *Nisan*, because it was at the time of the creation of the world.

We take in a wrong sense the words of Moses [b], when we translate, *This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year unto you*. The verb *substantive* is not expressed in the Hebrew, and it is more natural to understand it (as in diverse other [c] places) in the *present tense*, than the *future*. We need not go beyond this book, or even chapter, to find examples of it. We must translate then as the LXX do: *this month is the beginning of*

[b] Exod. xii. 2.

[c] See Exod. xxxi. 15, 14. 17. xii. 27. 42.

K

months.

months, the first month of the year. Mr. Martin saies, in his note on these words, that *this is to be understood of the ecclesiastical year, upon which they regulated all the festival days and all the other divine services*; for, he adds, *with respect to the Civil year, to which they had regard in all affairs purely political, that began among the Hebrews, as well as among other people then, in the month of September.* But, besides what I have observed, what likelihood is there that the Civil year was so distinguished from the Ecclesiastical in the republic of Israel, which was a sacred republic, of which God himself was the Head and Sovereign; a state where the Civil was mixt with the Ecclesiastical part, and where Religion made the principal distinction of the times?

What is more, the month Nisan is called *the beginning and the first month* of the year, not only where the divine service [d] is concerned, but on every other occasion where the sacred worship is not concerned; thus the spring, when they went into the country, is called *the expiration of the year* [e], or *the return of the year* [f]; and it is from thence Rochart derives the original of the word *Nisan*, that it is formed from נִסָּנִים, vexillum, a standard [g]; which is a little better founded than the explication which Mons. Bagnage [h] gives of the word אֶבָנַיִם *Eibanim*, which is

[d] Lev. xvi. 22. Numb. xxviii. 11.

[e] 2 Sam. xi. 1.

[f] 1 Kings xx. 22. 26.

[g] See Michaelis, above, p. 13.

[h] Hist. des Juifs, l. v. c. 10.

the

the name of the month which answers to our *September*; pretending, that the name which signifies *the ancients* is given to this month, because it is the *first* of all the months. For this word signifies rather *strong, robust*, as Buxtorf and Cocceius expound it; and according to some interpreters, this month is so called, because we gather in it *what renders men strong*. It is called, not the *first*, but the *seventh* month, in the place where it is called *Eibanim*, 1 Kings viii. 2.

§ V. But it is said, does it not evidently appear, that Moses appointed a new epoch, and a new way of counting the months, particularly for the Israelites, when he does not simply say, *this is the month*, but it is *to you the first month*? Paulus Burgenfis [i] saies, that though there is here a new epoch established among the Hebrews, it does not follow that there was another before fixed among them, since they counted not their months nor their years from a certain fixed epochs, but only by the lives of their Patriarch. Which Heidegger contradicts [k], who saies [l], *at the end of the days of corn he made his offering*, understanding after the Rabbies (as do Fagius and some others, whom Mr. Martin follows in his Notes) by the *end of the days* the end of the year. But it is much better translated, as it is in our Version, *in process of time*. For there is no appearance that he speaks of the end of the year, since nothing precedes that has relation to any year.

[i] In Lyran. addit. 1.

[k] Hist. Patriarch. ex. c. xii.

[l] Gen. iv. 3.

K 2

Besides,

Besides, Monf. Goufflet [*m*] observes, that it would have been too late to offer the fruits of the earth in September, because, we see afterwards the law undoubtedly prescribes the *offering* of the first fruits more than four months earlier.

We might oppose to *Paulus Bargesius* the computation which Moses makes [*n*] of the *second* month, the decrease of it from the *seventeenth* day of the *seventh* month, and the end on the first day of the first month of the following year. Upon which we need not say, that the *second* month, when the flood commenced, should answer to our autumn; because then the rains are most frequent. But why shall we not rather say, with Father *Hardouin*, Chronol. Vet. Test. p. 518. that because God, willing the better to make them comprehend that it was his work, made it rain out of course in spring? Moses makes it understood that the flood was altogether miraculous, when he saies [*o*], *the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened*? And yet we may observe by the bye, this remark of Father *Hardouin* does agree very well with what he advances, viz. that it had never rained before the flood: for had this been the case, the flood must have been out of course whenever it was.

But at bottom, Father *Hardouin* agrees here with the learned [*p*] *James Scheuchzerus*, the famous Pro-

[*m*] Com. L. Ebr. p. 314. K.

[*n*] Gen. vii. 11. viii. 4, 5. 13.

[*o*] Gen. vii. 11, 12.

[*p*] *Hurtar. Diluv. in the Art. Lips.* O.R. 1710. p. 451.

feſſor

feſſor at *Zurich*, who, computing the time of the flood, saies, *that Noah continued in the Ark about a year after the month of May, even to the same month of the following year.* Langius [*q*] has confirmed this sentiment by the archives of the Chaldeans, which *Berosus*, and after him *Abydenus* and *Polybistor*, have produced. Indeed it is the constant style of Moses, to call *Nisan* always the *first* month, and that which follows it the *second*. Thus dryness of the earth, upon the first day of the first month, which opened a way for the re-establishment of a new world, answers to the time of the creation of the first. It is that likewise which answers to the Israelites going out of Egypt, and, as Langius proves [*r*], their entering into the land of Canaan; which appears evidently by Joshua, v. 10, 11; God having thus assigned the same time for these great events, that they might have them all together before their eyes in all the worship which was prescribed to them. It is also in this view that he mentions in the Decalogue, the deliverance from Egypt, and the creation of the world. It is then apparently for this reason, that Moses expresses himself in these terms, *this month is the beginning of months.*

It is observable, that the Author [*s*] of the first book of *Maccabees*, reckoning according to the manner of the Jews, commences the year with the month *Nisan*,

[*q*] De ann. Christi, l. ii. c. 2. p. 246.

[*r*] De ann. Christi, l. i. c. 11. p. 141. Wichtman. Chron. S. l. i. par. ii. p. 57.

[*s*] Uobbo Emmius rer. Chron. l. i. p. 18. Nouv. de la rep. des Lett. t. i. p. 36. See 1 Mac. ix. 3. et 54.

when

when he puts the death of *Alcimus* at the second month of the year 153, of the era of the *Seleucidae*.

§ VI. The *Persians* follow the same calculation; since, according to *Olearius* [c], they celebrate the first day of the year, which they call *Nearus*, the tenth of March, O. S. which is the 21st, when the sun enters into the sign of the Ram, and the Spring Equinox begins.

The *Armenians* celebrate it at the same time [u], as also the subjects of the Great Mogul in the city of *Agra*; and the *Chinese* [w], who begin their year with the New Moon of March. The *Arabians* and *Damascenians* began likewise the year with the Spring Equinox. The Romans did the same before *Numa*. The same did the ancient *Chaldeans* and *Assyrians*, by the testimony of *Simplicius* [x].

As for the Egyptians, if they began the year at the Autumnal Equinox, it was not from ancient tradition, nor with respect to the creation of the world, but with regard to the overflowing of the Nile, which was always in *Autumn* [y]. A late Author pretends, that anciently the Egyptian year consisted only of three

[c] Hist. de *Mosé*, and of the *Persians*, par. i. l. iv. p. 400. and l. xv. p. 606. See *Seld. Uxor. Hebr.* l. ii. c. 21.

[u] *Ibid.* t. ii. l. vi. p. 56.

[w] *Maffue*, Hist. des *Indes*, l. vi. p. 264. and *Voyage des Indes* of *Mandello*, l. i. p. 177. and l. ii. p. 490. *Rigault*, Rel. de la *Chine*, c. vii.

[x] *Physic.* *Aristot.* *Ubbé Emmius*, rer. Chron. l. i. p. 9. et 16.

[y] *Lang.* de ann. *Christi*, l. i. c. 16. p. 225. and l. ii. c. 2. p. 247.

months;

months; which he proves by *Plutarch*, *Diodorus Siculus*, and *Conforinus* [z], adding, what *Herodotus* saies, that the Egyptians had not divided their year into xii months, till the time of *Daniel*, when Egypt became subject to *Nebucadonzer* in the year of the world 3450; above twenty years before *Herodotus* [a].

§ VII. But we must answer the only and great argument, which *Father Petavius* saies determined him to fix the Civil year of the Jews in autumn; which is, because the feast of ingathering, which uses to be celebrated in the month of *Tisri* [b], is prescribed at the end of the year [c]. I answer in the first place, that if *Tisri* is the first month in the year, we cannot say, that a feast which was celebrated after the fifteenth, even to the twenty-second of that month, was solemnized at the end of the year.

It is what *Mr. Martin* has well thought, because he has translated the first place in our Version, *after the end of the year*. But this *after* is of his imagination, and not in the original; so he has not put it in the second passage. He cites three passages [d] to prove, that the first preposition (*אחרי*) sometimes signifies *after*. But, in the first place; when this preposition occurs in this sense, it is determined to it, by the terms

[z] See likewise *Pliny*, l. vii. c. 43. *S. Augustin de Civit. Dei*, l. xii. c. 10.

[a] See the *Nouvelle de la Res. des Lettr.* March 1709. p. 328.

[b] *Lev.* xxiii. 39.

[c] *Exod.* xxiii. 16. xxxiv. 22.

[d] *Exod.* ii. 23. *Numb.* xxviii. 26. *Amos* ix. 11.

which

which are joined with it, or by the thing it treats of; whereas here what precedes and what follows, as also the manner in which the time of the solemnity is elsewhere announced, determines it to the more ordinary signification. In the *second* place, when this preposition is taken for *after*, it marks an event which touches and which immediately follows the time you were speaking of; which is not the case here, where there was a space of *fifteen* days between the end of the year, and the feast we are now upon. Lastly, does use permit us to mark the time of a ceremony fixed to the *fifteenth* day of the year, to say that it is *after* the end of the year? Would it not be more natural to say, *towards the beginning*, or, *in the first month of the year*?

What then will these Hebrew expressions mean, **בַּעֲתָת הַשָּׁנָה** *ba'etath haschanah*, **תְּקוּפַת הַשָּׁנָה** *Tekouphath haschanah*? They signify, according to Mr. Goussier [c], the beginning of the decline of the year; the time when the sun, having turned round near us, after the Spring Equinox, begins to depart from us to approach the other hemisphere. An expression very agreeable to the people who commence the year at the Spring Equinox, when the sun begins to go further from the opposite hemisphere, to come nearer to them. Thus we see the going forth and the course of the sun expressed in the two terms here employed. We may say with Mr. Wickman, that this expression *Tekouphath haschanah*, as also that of *Tekouphath haschanah* are

[c] Comm. L. Ebr. p. 338. C. and 740.

equally applied to the two Equinoxes; because the sun passes from one hemisphere to the other [f].

Whence comes it then, they will say, that *Josephus* and the Chaldee Paraphrast affirm so positively, that *Moses*, in establishing the month of *Nisan*, the epoch of the year for sacred ceremonies, does not appoint any change for that which concerns the civil affairs? We may answer that these authors speak in this manner, because they found in their time the usage established to begin the year in Autumn for affairs purely civil; which was introduced at the time of *Seleucus Nicator*, one of the Successors of *Alexander*, who, being master of all Asia, ordered the people who were subject to him, to follow the Macedonian era, afterwards called the era of *Seleucide*, which began the year at the Equinox of Autumn [g]; to which the Jews were obliged to submit in their civil affairs, though they always retained their ancient epoch in regard to their sacred ceremonies.

* It is this ancient epoch, which is followed by the author of the first book of *Maccabees*; whereas that of the second book follows the new [b]. It is that which makes *Josephus* and the other Jewish doctors believe through ignorance, or would make believe through vanity, that this usage was established among

[f] See Chron. S. l. i. par. ii. p. 57. 1 Chron. xx. 1. 2 Chron. xxii. 43. and xxxvi. 10.

[g] Ubbo Emmius, rer. Chron. l. i. p. 18. and 24. Lang. de annis Christi, c. xvii. p. 332. Calvis. Magog. Chr. c. ix. p. 90. and c. xii. p. 109.

[b] Calvis. ibid. c. xxvi. p. 156.

them from the time of Moses, in the same manner that they give to this legislator several customs which were not invented till long after him. We see in *Sebus Calvisius* [i], with regard to the Arabians and the Astronomers, a conjecture very near that which we propose concerning Josephus and the Jewish doctors.

We may add to this conjecture, that of *Wichman* [k], namely, that the Jews were more willingly inclined to fix their epoch for affairs purely civil in autumn, because it was that of the *Sabbatical* and *Jubilee* years, to which they were obliged to have regard in all their contracts of buying and selling.

§ VIII. If it is objected to me, that *Buxtorf* [l] relates at length the celebration at the beginning of the year, which the Jews solemnize the first day of *Tisri*, conformably to the order which they received from God himself [m]; I answer, that it is true; God commanded them to keep the first day of *Tisri* holy, but not because it was the first day of the year; but rather, as we have already observed, and as the legislator himself explains it, because it was the first day of the seventh month. If it was so, some one will perhaps say, God would not have commanded to keep holy the first day of the year, the anniversary of the creation of the world. I answer in the first place, that God would that they should celebrate not the first day of the creation, but the seventh, upon which seeing his work

[i] *Magog. Chron.* c. xliii. p. 215.

[k] *Chron. S. l. i. par. ii.* p. 59.

[l] *Synag. Jud.* c. xxiii. and xxiv.

[m] *Lev. xxiii. 24.* *Numb. xxix. 7.*

finished,

finished, he blessed it; it was also that, as we have seen, to which referred the solemnities of the seventh day of the week, the day following the seven weeks, the seventh month of the seventh year, and of the seventh week of years.

I answer in the second place, that the command to keep holy the beginning of the months, chiefly concerns the first of all the months; which is the reason why that command precedes immediately that of the solemnity of the Passover [n]. It is likewise particularly the solemnity of the first day of the first month, which is recommended by *Asaph*, in these words [o]: *Blow up the trumpet in the new moon: in the time appointed on our solemn feast-day.* *Spencer* [p] proves that is the beginning of the first month, because new moons of the other months are never called, as these, *the solemnities, or the solemn feasts.* *M. de Muis* understands it, after the Chaldee Paraphrast, of the month of *Tisri*; but it is rather that of *Nisan*, which they began, without doubt, in preparing themselves for a preparation of the Passover; since upon the tenth day, they were to set apart the lambs [q] which were to be killed for that purpose. The Psalmist explains himself, when he saies, *for our feast day*; that is, for the Passover, as appears by the following verses, where the deliverance out of Egypt from Egyptian slavery is particularly spoken of.

[n] *Numb. xxviii. 17.*

[o] *Pf. lxxx. 4.*

[p] *De Leg. Heb. l. iii. c. 1. Dis. iv. § 3.*

[q] *Exod. xii. 3. 6.*

L 2

The

The Hebrew word כספ *casab*, or כסא *casā*, which we translate here *solemnity*, in Proverbs viii. 20. *a day assigned*, comes from the verb כסס *to number; to compute*; thus, as Mr. Gouffet observes [r], it agrees very well to the month *Nisan*, from whence they began to count the days and the months, as well as the solemnities of the year [s]. The number even of those who were to compose the assembly to eat the Passover, is likewise expressed by this verb [r].

These, Sir, are the doubts and the conjectures I have to propose on this subject; to which you will pay so much regard as you shall think proper. I have nothing to add at present, but my sincere protestations of being yours while I live, &c.

[r] Com. L. Ebr. p. 394.

[s] Exod. xii. 2.

[t] Ibid. ver. 6.